



CAMP BURNT GIN

Parent Handbook



Dear Parents,

Going to summer camp is an exciting, new adventure for campers as well as their parents. As a parent, it is natural for you to have questions and to be a little nervous about sending your child to camp. I hope this handbook will help answer your questions and prepare you and your child for this experience.

Camp Burnt Gin is more than just a place. It's an experience of a lifetime. It's learning to swim; appreciating the environment; riding in a paddleboat; performing in a talent show; making a craft; discovering a buried treasure; roasting marshmallows; singing campfire songs; meeting new friends; gaining independence; helping others; feeling good about yourself and having lots of fun!

Thank you for giving your child the opportunity to go to summer camp and for entrusting them to us. DHEC has offered this special service to South Carolinians since 1945, and we look forward to the privilege of sharing the Camp Burnt Gin experience with your child. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at **803-898-0784**, or **campburntgin@dhec.sc.gov**.

In the Burnt Gin spirit,

Marie I. Aimone,
Camp Director

Maggie Krueger,
Assistant Camp Director



About Camp Burnt Gin

Our Mission

To enhance the quality of life of our campers by providing a camp experience designed to improve self-esteem, independence and the skills necessary to develop and maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Our Commitment

Camp Burnt Gin is committed to creating a diverse, inclusive, and equitable environment for all employees, volunteers, and campers whatever their disability, ethnicity, national origin, race, gender, sexual orientation, and other identities. At Camp Burnt Gin, we celebrate differences and build a safe community where campers and staff can learn, grow, and experience acceptance.

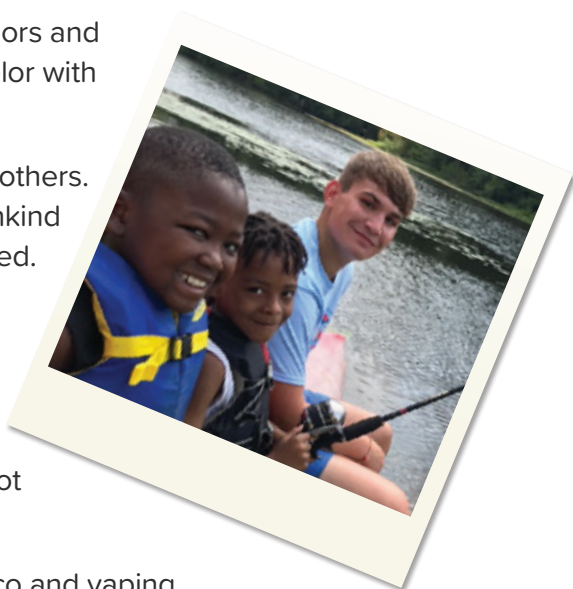
Our Core Values

- Focusing on Safety
- Embracing Service
- Inspiring Innovation
- Promoting Teamwork
- Pursuing Excellence
- Advancing Equity



Our Code of Conduct

1. Have fun and be safe.
2. Listen to your counselors and always have a counselor with you.
3. Respect yourself and others. Profanity and other unkind remarks are not allowed.
4. Solve your problems in a peaceful manner. Fighting, hitting, kicking or harming others in any way is not tolerated.
5. Alcohol, drugs, tobacco and vaping products are not allowed.
6. Weapons of any kind (guns, knives, etc.) are strictly prohibited.



Please discuss the rules with your child. We recognize the special needs of our campers and will, as much as possible, individualize the rules according to the needs and abilities of each camper. If you have any concerns regarding your child's ability to abide by these rules, please call the camp director, Marie Aimone.

New Requirement!

Pre-Camp Health Questionnaire

To help us promote a healthy camp environment, please monitor your camper's health for 7 days prior to their camp session. **We will send you a link to our NEW Pre-Camp Health Questionnaire.** The day before your child's scheduled camp session, please complete and submit the electronic form. **This form is REQUIRED.**

If your child is showing signs of illness such as running a fever, nasal drainage, coughing, sneezing, sore throat, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, **please keep your child at home and contact the Camp Director at 803-898-0784 or campburntgin@dhc.sc.gov.** If your child presents at camp and is sick, they will not be permitted to stay.

Please refer to the **Healthcare Section** of the Handbook for further guidance regarding how we handle illnesses during a camp session.



What to Bring to Camp

When packing, please only send play clothes and put your child's name or initials in each article of clothing with a permanent marker. Keeping up with clothes is one of the counselors' greatest challenges! We have a laundry facility and will wash clothes if a child runs out of clean clothes.

Try to send only what you feel is necessary for a week. Below is what we think your child can use at camp.

- t-shirts
- underwear
- shorts
- pajamas
- socks
- bathing suit
- comb/brush
- medicine and completed medication form (*DHEC 2388*)
- one pair of long pants (*jeans or sweats*)
- shoes (*tennis shoes suggested*)
- flip flops or sandals (*for the pool and bath house*)
- toothbrush, toothpaste, shampoo, deodorant
- special equipment (*wheelchair, AFOs, special feeding equipment*)
- medical supplies used by your child (*diapers, special formula*)

Camp Burnt Gin is not responsible for expenses related to the damage or loss of personal items such as radios, CD players, iPods and cameras. Campers may bring these items at their own risk.

What *Not* to Bring

The following items are not allowed at camp:

- cell phones
- electronic games
- pets
- personal sports equipment
- TVs and DVD players
- weapons
- music containing profanity and/or inappropriate language or subject matter
- tobacco products, alcohol, and drugs

Campers DO NOT NEED towels, sheets and pillows *(supplied by camp)* or money.



Transportation Issues

It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to provide transportation or make arrangements for transportation to and from camp for their child. It is also the parent/guardian's responsibility to pick up the child if he/she has to leave camp before the session is over (i.e., illness, problems adjusting to camp life). We **STRONGLY** recommend that families have a back up plan in case their primary means of transportation fails. Camp Burnt Gin staff members cannot give campers a ride home. If your family needs assistance with transportation, please contact the Camp Director to discuss some possible options.



Opening Day

Campers must arrive between 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. The check-in process will take at least an hour. During check-in the camper and parent or accompanying adult will:

- Meet your child's camp counselor
- Review camper's medications with the camp nurse.
- Go to the infirmary where a nurse will complete a brief health screening.
- Visit your child's cabin to see where your child will be staying.

Due to the special needs of our campers, it is important that our staff have the opportunity to meet parents and learn from them! We appreciate your assistance and patience with this process.



Daily Life at Camp

A typical cabin has eight children and three staff members who live with the campers and are responsible for their supervision and personal care. Our camp staff are selected after a comprehensive interview process and background check, with the most qualified staff being selected for the position. The majority of the staff are college students who are pursuing a future in education or a health-related field. They typically come to Camp Burnt Gin to gain some valuable work experience and because they heard it was a fun, rewarding summer job.

The camp staff participate in a week long training program to learn about: the different disabilities of the children and how to take care of them; the camp routine and specific camp skills; camp policies and procedures; developing and maintaining a safe camp environment, and how to deal with homesickness and other issues.

Mail

Children love to get mail! Since our sessions are short, you might want to mail a letter the day your child leaves for camp or bring some letters with you on check in day and give them to our staff to put in the camp mailbox. Creative ideas for mail: include a comic strip, a drawing by their brother or sister, a note from their favorite pet; and decorate the envelope.



MAILING ADDRESS:

**Your child's name,
Camp Burnt Gin
1980 Burnt Gin Rd.
Wedgefield, SC 29168**

Daily Schedule

7:15 a.m.	Wake up, get dressed and clean cabin
8:15 a.m.	Breakfast
9:00 a.m.	Morning Motivation and Movement
9:15 a.m.	Committee Work
10:00 a.m.–10:45 a.m.	Arts and Crafts
10:45 a.m.–11:30 a.m.	Sports and Games
11:30 a.m.–12:15 p.m.	Swimming Lessons
12:15 p.m.–1:00 p.m.	Fine Arts, Nature and Science Activities
1:05 p.m.–2:00 p.m.	Lunch
2:15 p.m.–3:15 p.m.	Rest Hour
3:30 p.m.–5:00 p.m.	Swimming and Boating
5:15 p.m.	Showers
6:00 p.m.	Dinner and Swimming Awards
7:15 p.m.–8:45 p.m.	Evening Program
9:30 p.m.	Bedtime

Phone calls

We realize that you may be concerned about your child and need to know how they are adjusting. It is OK to give us a quick call (once or twice during the session) to check on your child, but please do not ask us to bring your child to the phone or have them call you. The children are busy and having fun. Leaving an activity to come to the phone can be very disruptive to the camper and usually causes homesickness.



Camp Office **(803) 494-3145**

For questions about
child's adjustment to
camp.

Camp Infirmary **(803) 494-3116**

For questions about
child's health.

What if My Child Becomes Homesick?

For many children, going to camp is their first time away from home. Typically, homesickness occurs during the first day or two. The counselors have been trained to deal with homesickness and help the campers adjust to camp life. In most cases, once your child gets involved in camp activities and gets to know their cabin mates and counselors, the homesickness goes away.

If we feel your child is having a particularly difficult time adjusting to camp life, we will call you to discuss the situation. Like you, we want camp to be a positive, healthy, successful experience.



Health Care at Camp

Medical Staff

Two nurses live at camp. The nurses administer the campers' medications, oversee any medical treatments and provide first aid and nursing care. Sumter Pediatrics serves as our physicians on call, and we use Tuomey Regional Medical Center in Sumter for emergency medical care and after hours visits. The doctors' office and the hospital are about 20 minutes away. Camp Burnt Gin is on the 911 system.

If your child has to go to the doctor, your child's insurance will be billed by the doctor's office. Any expenses not covered are the responsibility of the family or caregiver.

Medications

If your child takes medicine on a regular basis, please be sure to send enough medicine for the entire camp session. Prescription drugs and over-the-counter medications must be sent in their original containers and the information on the label regarding dosage and how to administer the medicine must be accurate and current. Camp Burnt Gin staff will not dispense vitamins and/or herbal supplements to campers.

The camp's medical consultant has recommended and approved a list of over-the-counter medications for our nursing staff to use to treat common ailments (upset stomach, runny nose, headache, scrapes). If there is an over-the-counter medication which your child is unable to take, please make sure to indicate this on your camp application and tell our nursing staff on check-in day.

In what situations will the camp nurse call a parent?

Don't panic if you get a call or message from the camp nurse. In some instances, she is simply calling to ask you a question regarding your child's medications or care while at camp. Other times, she is calling to tell you that your child is sick.

Small scrapes, bumps, bug bites, headaches and stomach aches are fairly common complaints at camp.

You will be called if your child:

- Has a fever (101° Fahrenheit or greater)
- Exhibits signs of a communicable disease
- Has to spend the night in the infirmary; or
- Has illness or injury requiring medical attention at a doctor's office, urgent care facility or hospital.



In the case of an emergency, we will call you as soon as the emergency is under control.

If your child exhibits any signs or symptoms of a communicable disease (flu, stomach virus, chicken pox, whooping cough, COVID, or fever with other respiratory symptoms), the nurse will notify you and the camper will need to be picked up by a parent/guardian. Our camp nurses do not treat for lice, so if a camper is suspected of having lice, the camper will be sent home.

How to Help Your Child Have a Great Time at Camp

Here are a few things you can do before your child goes to camp to help prepare him/her for this new, exciting learning experience.

1. Discuss what camp will be like in a positive way. You could say, “You and some other children close to your age will live in a cabin with three counselors. Your counselors will take care of you, help you make friends and make sure you have lots of fun. You will get to make things and play games and go swimming. You will learn about animals and plants.”
2. Allow your child to pack a favorite stuffed animal and/or a picture as a reminder of home.
3. Send a “happy” letter to your child the day they leave or even before they leave for camp so they receive mail from home early in the session.
4. Acknowledge that you will miss your child, but don’t over emphasize how much you will miss them. This can add to your child’s level of homesickness.
5. Don’t go into great detail about the fun things you are doing while your child is away at camp or they might feel left out.
6. Don’t tell your child that you will “rescue” them from camp if they do not like camp or are homesick. With all new experiences, it takes a little while to adjust. If your child knows they do not have to give camp a chance, often times they will not. Remember separation is a part of growing up. It is not always easy, but it helps your child become more independent and confident. It also helps to recognize that separation is often harder on the parent than it is on the child. We will call you if your child is overly homesick.

When Your Child Comes Home From Camp

After a session of camp where the days and evenings are filled with activities, your child may be tired. Give them time to rest and readjust to life at home. Praise your child for their independence and tell your child you are proud of them for going to camp, trying new things and meeting new friends.



When you unpack, you may find some very dirty clothes. Items in plastic bags are wet or recently soiled. In an attempt to prevent clothes from getting left behind, we do not send wet or soiled clothes to the laundry on the last day of camp. Counselors simply rinse out these clothes and put them in a plastic bag.



Despite all our efforts to keep up with the children's clothes, items may be left behind or sent home with the wrong camper. If you are missing something, send us a note or call us and give us a description of the item. We will try to find the missing items, but sometimes they are simply lost.

Directions to Camp Burnt Gin

From Columbia

Take Highway 76/378 towards Sumter. At the intersection of Highway 76/378 and Highway 261, take a right on Highway 261. Cross over the railroad tracks in Wedgefield and continue on Highway 261. You will pass the post office on your left. Less than a mile after the post office, you will see the Burnt Gin Road on your left. Take a left on the Burnt Gin Road and continue on the dirt road (you will come to two forks in the road, bear left at each one) until you reach Camp Burnt Gin (1 mile).



From Florence

Take Highway 76 towards Sumter. Highway 76 will merge with Highway 378 near Sumter. Continue on 76/378 past Shaw Air Force Base. At the intersection of Highway 76/378 and Highway 261, take a left on Highway 261. Cross over the railroad tracks in Wedgefield and continue on Highway 261. You will pass the post office on your left. Less than a mile after the post office, you will see the Burnt Gin Road on your left. Take a left on the Burnt Gin Road and continue on the dirt road (you will come to two forks in the road, bear left at each one) until you reach Camp Burnt Gin (1 mile).

From Charleston

Take I-26 to I-95 north. Take the Manning exit, Highway 261. Go left on 261 towards Paxville and Pinewood. Continue on 261 through Pinewood. You will pass the Poinsett State Park. The Burnt Gin Road is approximately 8 miles past Poinsett State Park on the right. About a mile before the road, you will pass two small churches. Take a right on the Burnt Gin Road (you will come to two forks in the road, bear left at each one) and follow the signs to Camp Burnt Gin (1 mile).

From Sumter

Camp Burnt Gin is located in Wedgefield, S.C., approximately 9 miles from downtown Sumter. Take Liberty Street to the Wedgefield Highway (Hwy 763). Take the Wedgefield Highway. The Burnt Gin Road is approximately 1.5 miles after you cross over the railroad tracks at Spann's Grocery (Cane Savannah). Take a left on the Burnt Gin Road and continue on the dirt road until you reach Camp Burnt Gin (1 mile).

From Greenville

Take I-26 until it intersects with I-77 towards Charlotte. Exit at Highway 378 east - Garners Ferry Road/Sumter. Take a right on Highway 76/378 towards Sumter. At the intersection of Highway 76/378 and Highway 261, take a right on Highway 261. Cross over the railroad tracks in Wedgefield and continue on Highway 261. You will pass the post office on your left. Less than a mile after the post office, you will see the Burnt Gin Road on your left. Take a left on the Burnt Gin Road and continue on the dirt road (you will come to two forks in the road, bear left at each one) until you reach Camp Burnt Gin (1 mile).

From Orangeburg

Take Highway 601. Take a right on Highway 76/378 towards Sumter. At the intersection of Highway 76/378 and Highway 261, take a right on Highway 261. Cross over the railroad tracks in Wedgefield and continue on Highway 261. You will pass the post office on your left. Less than a mile after the post office, you will see the Burnt Gin Road on your left. Take a left on the Burnt Gin Road and continue on the dirt road (you will come to two forks in the road, bear left at each one) until you reach Camp Burnt Gin (1 mile).



Feedback

We welcome your feedback about our camp program, our staff and your child's camp experience. We will ask you to complete an evaluation form after your child's camp session. In addition, you may share your thoughts about Camp Burnt Gin with the Camp director, or the DHEC Division of Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs Program by phone **(803-898-0784)** or **campburntgin@dhec.sc.gov**.

We recognize that you may want to express your appreciation to your child's counselors. **Camp staff cannot accept gifts, money or tips**, however a thank you note is always special and often the most meaningful gift.

Donations

Camp Burnt Gin welcomes the support of friends, family members and community groups. Tax deductible contributions can be made to Camp Burnt Gin," and mailed to:

DHEC

Division of CYSHCN

2100 Bull Street,

Columbia SC 29201.





scdhec.gov/campburntgin